

3. (Twice Amended) A thermoplastic sealing or connecting component for the fashioning of a permanent connection, obtained by a process comprising:

- C²
- a. molding the component from a thermoplastic elastomeric material;
 - b. stretching the component;
 - c. relaxing the component at ambient temperature.

5. (Twice Amended) A process for fashioning a permanent connection between at least 2 components with at least one thermoplastic sealing or connecting component according to claim 3, and at least one non-sealing member, comprising:

- C³
- Sub 1
- a. placing said thermoplastic sealing or connecting component at the location of the desired connection on said non-sealing member; and
 - b. exposing said thermoplastic sealing or connecting component to an increased temperature of at most about 20 °C below the melting point of the thermoplastic elastomeric material.

6. A thermoplastic sealing or connecting component according to claim 3, selected from body plugs, gasket rings, sealing rings, or shrink-on sleeveings.

8. (Twice Amended) A process for fashioning a permanent connection between at least 2 components, with at least one thermoplastic sealing or connecting component according to claim 4, and at least one non-sealing member, comprising:

- C⁴
- a. placing said thermoplastic sealing or connecting component at the location of the desired connection on said non-sealing member;

- b. exposing said thermoplastic sealing or connecting component to an increased temperature of at most about 20 °C below the melting point of the thermoplastic elastomeric material.

9. (Amended) A thermoplastic sealing or connecting component according to claim 6, selected from body plugs, gasket rings, sealing rings, or shrink-on sleeveings.

See the attached Appendix for the changes made to effect the above claim(s)

Please add the following new claim(s):

13. (New) A process according to claim 1, wherein the thermoplastic elastomeric material comprises a block copolymer comprising hard blocks, wherein said hard blocks comprise polyurethane, polyester or polyamide.

14. (New) A thermoplastic sealing or connecting member according to claim 3, wherein the thermoplastic elastomeric material comprises a block copolymer comprising hard blocks, wherein said hard blocks comprise polyurethane, polyester or polyamide.